

Monday, May 3, 2021

Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Attn: Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and members of the HCIFS Committee,

My name is Brooke Dunphey and I am a native of Maine. I was born and raised in York, received my Masters from USM, am an employee of MSAD 60, and live in Kittery. As a woman medically diagnosed with infertility, I am writing to express my strong support for LD 1539, An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care. I ask that you vote "ought to pass."

Raising a family in Maine has been a dream of mine since I can remember. Growing up in Maine I was lucky to explore the surrounding beauty our state offered. Whether it was fishing off the footbridge in Boothbay, building sand castles on Sandy Beach in Acadia, or eating ice cream at Nubble Light with my family, I was awestruck. I've always envisioned sharing the same types of experiences with my own child. Unfortunately, after trying to conceive on our own for two and a half years my husband and I were diagnosed with infertility. We are not alone facing this diagnosis; 1 in 6 couples face infertility, and 17% of Mainers who are of reproductive age will require treatment.

Until I was diagnosed with infertility, I was unaware of IVF's astronomical costs. One round of IVF at my clinic in 2020 was \$15,750.00, now in 2021 with inflation the same round costs \$18,750.00. These draining prices do not even include any medications which can range from \$3,000.00 up to \$6,000.00 per round. Naively, I was under the impression that since I worked as a school psychologist in the public schools of Maine and was enrolled in a dependable health insurance policy that my medical treatments for infertility would be covered. It was a rude awakening to find out that none of the treatments were covered. In order for my husband and I to grow our family we had to take out a substantial personal loan. The emotional toll of IVF coupled with financial burdens is grueling. Alleviating the financial stress would lessen hardships couples face.

I was shocked to learn that Maine is one of the last two states in New England to offer IVF health insurance coverage but offers assistance only to state employees. This August our rental lease terminates. My husband and I are debating moving one mile south to Portsmouth, New Hampshire where IVF is covered.

Thank you for your time and consideration to provide access to fertility care for many individuals and couples who rely on fertility treatments to build their families in Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brooke" followed by a stylized flourish.

Brooke Dunphey, MS NCSP

Nationally Certified School Psychologist #38135

